

3 a hollow needle having an inner lumen, a sharpened distal end  
4 for penetrating tissue and a proximal end adapted to receive a syringe,  
5 a stylet having proximal and distal ends, being positioned within  
6 the inner lumen of said needle and being spaced from the interior of said  
7 needle to facilitate back flow of blood when a blood vessel is penetrated,  
8 the stylet including an ultrasound transducer supported at [one] the  
9 distal end for transmitting and receiving ultrasonic waves through the  
10 sharpened end of said needle,

11 [a support rod for supporting said transducer, means attaching  
12 said transducer to said support rod, coaxial] electrical conductors  
13 associated with said [support rod] stylet for transmitting electrical  
14 signals to and from said transducer, including a [wire] first conductor  
15 extending through said [support rod] stylet electrically connected with  
16 a back surface of said transducer, and a [metal] second conductor on the  
17 surface of said [rod] stylet electrically [interconnected] connected with a  
18 front surface of said transducer[, said metal conductor and support rod  
19 being spaced from said needle to facilitate back flow of blood when a  
20 blood vessel is penetrated], and

21 a syringe portion detachably attached to the proximal end of said  
22 needle.

In claim 6, line 1, change "trocar" to --stylet--

Please add the following new claims:

1           7.   Apparatus for use in cannulation of blood vessels comprising  
2           a hollow needle having an inner lumen, a sharpened distal end for  
3           penetrating tissue  
4           a stylet having proximal and distal ends, being positioned within the  
5           inner lumen of said needle, having an inner lumen to facilitate back  
6           flow of blood when the distal end of the needle is disposed within the  
7           blood vessel, the stylet including an ultrasound transducer means  
8           supported at the distal end of the stylet for transmitting and receiving  
9           ultrasonic waves through the sharpened end of said needle,

10               electrical conductors associated with said stylet for transmitting  
11           electrical signals to and from said transducer means, including a first  
12           conductor having a cylindrical shape and being electrically connected  
13           with a first surface of said transducer means, and a second conductor  
14           being electrically connected with a second surface of said transducer.

1           8.   The apparatus of claim 7 wherein the stylet has an inner lumen  
2           extending longitudinally therein formed by the cylindrically shaped conductor  
3           and the ultrasound transducer means is secured to the end of the cylindrically  
4           shaped conductor.

1           9.    The apparatus of claim 8 wherein the ultrasound transducer  
2           means has a circular shape.

1           10.   The apparatus of claim 9 wherein the ultrasound transducer  
2           means has a central aperture which is in communication with the inner lumen  
3           of the stylet.

1           11.   The apparatus of claim 7 wherein the stylet is disposed within the  
2           inner lumen of the hollow needle with the second conductor electrically  
3           connected to the hollow needle.

1           12.   The stylet of claim 7 wherein the second conductor is stainless  
2           steel tubing.

1           13.   The stylet of claim 7 wherein a syringe is releasably secured to  
2           the proximal end of the needle.

1           14.   A method for guiding a hollow needle through tissue into a blood  
2           vessel of a patient comprising:

3                   a)   providing an apparatus which includes:

4                               a hollow needle having an inner lumen, a sharpened  
5                               distal end for penetrating tissue and a proximal end.

6                    an elongated stylet having proximal and distal ends  
7                    positioned within the inner lumen of said needle and  
8                    including an ultrasonic transducer means secured to the  
9                    distal end of the stylet for transmitting and receiving  
10                   ultrasonic waves through the sharpened distal end of said  
11                   needle having a front surface and a rear surface, electrical  
12                   conductors associated with said stylet for transmitting  
13                   electrical signals to and from said transducer means,  
14                   including a first electrical conductor extending through the  
15                   interior of the stylet and being electrically connected to one  
16                   surface of said transducer means, and a second electrical  
17                   conductor being electrically connected to a second surface  
18                   of said transducer means;  
19                   b)    penetrating the skin of the patient with the sharp distal  
20                   end of the needle and advancing the needle through the tissue of the  
21                   patient;  
22                   c)    emitting ultrasonic waves from the ultrasound transducer  
23                   means on the distal end of the stylet, receiving reflected ultrasonic  
24                   waves by said transducer means and generating a signal representing  
25                   the reflected ultrasonic waves; and  
26                   d)    adjusting the direction of the distal sharpened end of the  
27                   needle as it is advanced through the patient's tissue based upon the

28        received ultrasonic waves to direct the sharpened distal end of the  
29        needle into a blood vessel of the patient, the approach of the needle to  
30        a blood vessel characterized by an increase in the intensity of the signals  
31        representing the reflected ultrasonic waves and the positioning of the  
32        sharpened distal end of the needle within a blood vessel characterized  
33        by a substantial increase in the signal representing the reflected  
34        ultrasonic waves.

1            15. The method of claim 14 wherein a syringe is secured to the  
2            proximal end of the needle and a back pressure is applied on the syringe to  
3            effect a negative pressure within the needle to create a back flow of blood into  
4            the syringe when the sharpened distal end of the needle is disposed within a  
5            blood vessel.

1            16. An apparatus for use in the cannulation of a blood vessel  
2            comprising:  
3                    a hollow needle having an inner lumen, a sharpened distal end  
4                    for penetrating tissue and a proximal end, and  
5                    a stylet having proximal and distal ends, being positioned within  
6                    the inner lumen of said needle and being spaced from the interior of said  
7                    needle to facilitate back flow of blood when the needle is positioned  
8                    within a blood vessel, the stylet including an ultrasound transducer

9           means supported at the distal end of the stylet for transmitting and  
10           receiving ultrasonic waves through the sharpened end of said needle  
11           electrical conductors associated with said stylet for transmitting  
12           electrical signals to and from said transducer means, including a first  
13           conductor extending through said stylet electrically connected with a  
14           first surface of said transducer, and a second conductor disposed about  
15           the first conductor electrically connected with a second surface of said  
16           transducer means.

1           17. The apparatus of claim 16 wherein a syringe is releasably secured  
2           to the proximal end of the needle.

1           18. The apparatus of claim 16 wherein the first conductor has a  
2           cylindrical shape, is disposed about the second conductor and is connected to  
3           the front surface of the transducer means and the second conductor is  
4           connected to the back surface of the transducer means.

1           19. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the first conductor has a  
2           cylindrical shape, is disposed about the second conductor and is connected to  
3           the front surface of the transducer means and the second conductor is  
4           connected to the back surface of the transducer means.

1           20.   A stylet having proximal and distal ends adapted to positioned  
2           within an inner lumen of a needle and dimensioned to be spaced from the  
3           interior of said needle to facilitate back flow of blood when the needle is  
4           positioned within a blood vessel, the stylet comprising:

5                   a)   an elongated body having proximal and distal ends;

6                   b)   an ultrasound transducer means supported at the distal end  
7                   of the elongated body for transmitting and receiving ultrasonic waves  
8                   through the sharpened end of said needle; and

9                   c)   electrical conductors associated with said stylet for  
10                  transmitting electrical signals to and from said transducer means,  
11                  including a first conductor wire extending through said stylet which is  
12                  electrically connected with a rear surface of said transducer means, and  
13                  a second conductor of essentially cylindrical shape disposed about the  
14                  first conductor electrically connected with a front surface of said  
15                  transducer means.

1           22.   The stylet of claim 21 wherein solid insulation is disposed  
2           between the first and second conductors.

1           23.   A kit for use in the cannulation of a blood vessel comprising:

2                   a)   a hollow needle having an inner lumen, a sharpened distal  
3                   end for penetrating tissue and a proximal end; and

4           b) a stylet having proximal and distal ends adapted to be  
5           positioned within the inner lumen of said needle and being spaced from  
6           the interior of said needle to facilitate back flow of blood when the  
7           needle is positioned within a blood vessel, the stylet including an  
8           ultrasound transducer means supported at the distal end of the stylet  
9           for transmitting and receiving ultrasonic waves through the sharpened  
10          end of said needle, electrical conductors associated with said stylet for  
11          transmitting electrical signals to and from said transducer means,  
12          including a first conductor extending through said stylet electrically  
13          connected with a first surface of said transducer, and a second conductor  
14          disposed about the first conductor electrically connected with a second  
15          surface of said transducer means.

#### REMARKS

The patentees respectfully request that the above amendments to the specification and the claims, including the addition of new claims, be considered by the Examiner during the initial examination of this application. It is believed that the amended and the new claims define patentable subject matter and consideration and an early allowance thereof are respectfully requested.